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10 January 2002

NOTIFICATION

Informal Meeting on Formats, Protocols and Standards for Improved Exchange of Biodiversity-related Information

Dear Madam/Sir,

I wish to draw your attention to annex II, item (h), of decision V/14 of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) in which the Executive Secretary was requested to “*identify possible formats, protocols and standards for the improved exchange of biodiversity-related data, information and knowledge, including national reports, biodiversity assessments and Global Biodiversity Outlook reports, and convene an informal meeting on this issue.*”

In response to this request, I am pleased to inform you that an informal meeting on formats, protocols and standards will be held at the offices of the Secretariat of the Convention Biological Diversity, in Montreal, on 19-20 February 2002 with financial support from the Governments of Belgium and the United States of America. The purpose of the informal meeting, as contemplated in decision V/14, will be to identify possible formats, protocols and standards for the improved exchange of biodiversity-related data, information and knowledge, including national reports, biodiversity assessments and Global Biodiversity Outlook reports. Issues pertaining to the identification of possible formats, protocols and standards in the Global Invasive Species Information Network will also be discussed.

The informal meeting will bring together approximately 25 experts and observers qualified in the fields of management of biodiversity-related issues, information-sharing systems and database management, establishment of clearing-houses and/or the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The experts will be selected on the basis of expertise, as well as the need to ensure regional balance and gender balance. The Secretariat will cover the cost of the participation of experts from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The meeting will be held in English. The conclusions of the informal meeting will be submitted to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in April 2002.

Please find attached herewith the provisional agenda and annotations thereto for the meeting.

I thank you for your cooperation in this matter and for your continued support of the work of the Convention.

Yours sincerely,

[signed]

Hamdallah Zedan
Executive Secretary